

Testimony to Appropriations Committee
11 February 2010

Good evening members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Jeanne Nodine and I am a registered voter from East Hartford. I have spoken before you in the past and want to thank you for the opportunity to do so again. I am here to speak about the proposed budget cuts to Housing and Medical for people living with HIV/Aids. We cannot afford to endure any further cuts to these line items in the upcoming budget. We have been suffering with cuts already. A lot of our medications cost well over \$1,500.00 per prescription. Without these benefits, most of us would not be able to afford to purchase the necessary medication to keep us alive and healthy. I know, speaking for myself that I would not be able to afford mine. One of my medications cost \$1,102.00 per month. I only have the insurance from the State of Connecticut which I am grateful for to pay for them. I receive only \$212.00 per month to live on and would never be able to do it. These medications as you are well aware of keep us healthy and alive. Without them, we would end up in long term hospitals which would cost the state even more money. I know we are in a huge deficit, but aren't our lives more important? I also have an opinion about the cuts to supportive housing for people living with HIV/Aids. We need to keep that line in the budget also. I know that I am grateful to have Shelter Plus Care through the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to pay my rent. They have kept me in stable housing which has resulted in my straightening my life out for the better. I know that without that help, I would still be on the streets playing the drug game. I have only \$212.00 to survive on per month which needs to pay my rent, utilities and purchase whatever isn't covered by food stamps for my house. I wish to encourage you to veto any proposed cuts to either of these line items in the upcoming budget. I know that there are still people with this disease who are homeless, living in shelters and or living with family. The reason for this is that they are unable to find affordable housing to be on their own. Nothing can cut your self-esteem worse than feeling like you don't matter in this world. We are people who need to have our self-esteem because otherwise the drug use will come back into play and we give up. I suffer from the disease as well as from depression. I suffer from depression on top of the disease of HIV and know that is where I would be if not for all the help I receive. These programs have given me a reason to live and please do not take them away from me. I urge you very strongly to not allow any further budget cuts to either of these line items. I appreciate you allowing me to speak to you again. I just hope that you realize the importance of these cuts to our lives. Are you going to allow us into your homes and take care of our medical needs?